

A
S E R M O N

Preached before the

694.d 15
1757

SONS of the CLERGY,

IN THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH of St. PAUL,

On THURSDAY, April 28, 1757.

By GLOCESTER RIDLEY, LL.B.
MINISTER of Poplar. K

To which is annexed,

A LIST of the Annual Amount of the Collection for this
CHARITY, from the Year 1721.

L O N D O N:

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TO

*The Right Reverend Father in God EDMUND, Lord Bishop of
Chester.*

The Reverend THOMAS HUNT, D. D.

The Reverend CHARLES MOSS, D. D.

The Reverend SAMUEL SALTER, D. D.

The Reverend WILLIAM COTTON, LL. D.

The Reverend WILLIAM REYNER, M. A.

The Reverend HENRY BURGH, M. A.

Sir WILLIAM DOLBEN, Bart.

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Captain HENRY WICKHAM,

JOHN DARKER, Junior, Esq.

ROBERT MANDEVILLE, Gent.

STEWARDS

For the late FEAST of the

SONS of the CLERGY,

THIS

SERMON,

Preached and published at their REQUEST,

Is INSCRIBED,

By their most faithful Servant,

GLOCESTER RIDLEY.

The Right Reverend Father in God (Bishop) Lord Bishop of
Chester.

The Reverend Thomas Hunt, D.D.

The Reverend Charles Moss, D.D.

The Reverend Samuel Salter, D.D.

The Reverend William Cotton, LL.D.

The Reverend William Rennie, M.A.

The Reverend Henry Burch, M.A.

Mr. William Dolben, Barr.

Willibrod Ellis, Esq.

Captain Henry Wickham.

John Dargatz, Esq.

Robert Mandeville, Gent.

STEWARDS

For the late EAST of the

SONS of the CLERGY

THIS

SERMON

Preached and published at their Request

as DESCRIBED

by their most Reverend

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ECCLESIASTES ix. 16.

Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.

THE Royal Preacher draws both parts of the observation from history, the generals of which he gives us in the two preceding verses; *There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.* v. 14, 15. And from thence infers, that *wisdom is better than strength*: but subjoins, as the English version gives the sense, *nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.* This indeed was true in the particular case to which he refers, and in several others that might be mentioned: but if made an universal maxim, that mankind always forget their poor benefactors, it would be too general an invective, which this assembly happily refutes. St. Jerome in the later vulgate turns it into an expostulation; *wisdom is better than*

than strength: wherefore then is the poor man's wisdom despised, and his words not heard? Suggesting, that as a suitable return is due, where great benefits have been received; so in whatever particular cases, or so far as, it has been neglected, the grateful and generous heart, when reminded of it, will see the equity and obligation of endeavouring to make it.

We need not curiously enquire after the particular history to which *Solomon* refers, if any later history of our own will furnish out a fact sufficient to evince the truth of this observation.

And as that great event, which furnished occasion for this annual solemnity, the *Reformation*, will abundantly support the general maxim, that *wisdom is better than strength*; so the objects, whom we would recommend to your compassion, the *Widows and Orphans of the Clergy of the Church of England*, give us too good warrant to expostulate; If the *Reformation* was a beneficial deliverance to this country, wherefore are these objects, who owe, most of them their very existence, all of them their miseries, to the *Reformation*, (so nearly are they related to it), permitted to lie under the keenest distress of any class of people in the community? Your wealth, and their calamities, are twins of the same birth: While then they derive their woes from the same source that you derive your blessings, we trust we may appeal with good success to your humanity in their behalf, *that your abundance may be a supply to their want.**

To estimate the blessings you then obtained, please to reflect on the oppressed state, in which the king and people were, before this deliverance was wrought for them.

* 2 Cor. viii. 14.

them. You will find, that they very exactly resembled that *little city, in which were few men; against which a great potentate came and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it.*

Such was the Pope armed with his supremacy, which exempted all ecclesiastics, of all their numerous orders and degrees, from the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate. A formidable army, at that time, engaged to defend and extend that power, by which they were protected from the civil sword: yet favoured by the prince, whose subjects they refused to be; and maintained at the expence of the people, against whom they were to serve. Nay this exemption was claimed, not only for their persons, but their very edifices, which were challenged as sanctuaries for all criminals that fled to them. Such numbers were by several means privileged, that King *Henry VIII.* complained, that "He was king of only half his subjects." So few were left to defend this little city!

And all the rest were so besieged by the Legate's court, which extended the Pope's empire over all the laity, in cases of heresy, or the suspicion of it, that while the prince on his throne was indeed but half a king of half his subjects, his people; from the dread of vexatious prosecutions in that court, costs, fines, tortures, and death itself, were effectually restrained from daring to attempt a deliverance.

The papal dominion thus established in *England* failed not to drain it of its treasure.

Besides the tithe and offerings due to the parochial Clergy for their labours in the ministry, at that time indeed corrupted with idolatry and superstition, other orders were invented, with pretended services, to raise new supplies from the people.

Of

Of these were the abbots with their colleges of monks, richly endowed with manors, lands, and tenements, to distribute some charities, and to pray for the souls of their founders and benefactors, and their families. *Two only of these abbies are said to have had more lands than all the royal demesnes were at that time. They likewise obtained by grants from the Pope the tithes of several churches to be settled on their convents; which gave rise to the distressful state of the poor vicarages at this day.

Thus went away the lands from the laity, and the tithes from the parochial clergy. And that labour and merchandise might not escape, there grew up another army in the several orders of Friars, swarming over the kingdom, to live on the alms and offerings of the people. Their trade consisted in dealing out absolutions, pardons, and indulgences, the merits and intercessions of Saints. This made them busy in amusing the people with legends of their Saints, to draw rich offerings to their shrines; and sedulous in attending the sick beds of rich men, as the best market for their pardons and indulgences. They, and the Monks between them, are reported to have become lords of more than half the temporalities of the kingdom.

And this papal militia of Monks and Friars were, most of them, hands subtracted from the labour that was due to the public: and, that they might be kept unconnected with the rest of the inhabitants, marriage was forbid them: which opened a door to such impurities as shocked human nature; injuries that troubled private families;

**Glasstonbury and Shaftesbury*: the whole number was 118.

families; and the cruel slaughter of infants, whose numbers made the sword of *Herod* appear comparatively innocent.

Besides these, the Pope was a perpetual draught of wealth out of this kingdom.

I presume it is not easy to say, with any tolerable exactness, what was his income from hence; but the general computation must make us congratulate ourselves on our deliverance from so burthensome a yoke; for both the Pope and Cardinal *Wolsey* are reported to have received, each of them, more than the king's revenue yearly.

We have now seen *the little city, and the few men in it; the mighty potentate that besieged it, and the great bulwarks be built against it.* And where was there strength and power able to encounter him?

Our English kings had experienced, that attempts to shake off the papal yoke, though with mighty armaments, only rivited it the faster on their necks; and king *John*, provoked to resist, found himself obliged to resign his crown to the Pope, and receive it again as feudatary to him, *as vassal, nay as the slave and property of the bishop of *Rome*. The spiritual sword was too subtle for the edge of steel: the enemy lay so deeply entrenched behind his redoubts of errors, that, while these were left standing, he was impregnable. Truth and piety had marked some out-lines, avarice and ambition had raised the works, scholastic divinity and papal decrees had fenced them round, while loss of goods, and life, and the terrors of damnation were the artillery discharged. In this warfare, wisdom would doubtless prove better

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than

* *Innocent IV.* speaks in these terms of our King *Henry III.*

than weapons of war.* The studies, and the labours of the learned were necessary, to investigate truth through antiquity up to its divine fountains; to disentangle it from the errors industriously blended with it; to detect the sophistry of the schools; and to stand the thunder of an anathema. Such wisdom, as it would prove more effectual than strength, so was it rare to find in those days. Some few God raised up, chiefly among the clergy, by whose learning, labours, and sufferings, our deliverance was wrought: the spiritual supremacy vindicated to him, to whom *all power in heaven and on earth was given, the author and finisher of our faith, Jesus the Christ;†* and the salvation of mankind, disencumbered from all that false delusive confidence which had endangered it, brought back to the genuine simplicity of gospel terms.

Besides the invaluable blessing to individuals of truth recovered, and religion purged from error, the nation in general received great temporal advantages at the same time.

This mighty deliverance brought back to the king ALL his subjects, and made him under God, (of what the Roman pontiff by the usurpation had half deprived him) within his realms "in all causes and over all persons, " as well ecclesiastical as temporal, supreme".

This recovered out of mortmain the vast revenues of abbies, monasteries, priories, and nunneries.

This gave to the public service many thousands of useful hands, which had been otherwise folded in the bosom of idleness, or employed in snatching the bread from

* Ecclesiastes ix. 18.

† Matthew xxviii. 18.

from the mouth of industry. Not only the lands that supported them have been divided among you, but their labours, besides their own support, have encreased the wealth of the community.

This made those days again to shine for civil use which God had indulged to us, *six days shalt thou labour and do all that thou hast to do**, by reclaiming from indolence and inactivity those numerous holy days on which they had been forbid to work; which had grown upon them so much in the last five hundred years†, as had left little more than one third part of the whole year for civil employment.

This farther saved to you a great proportion of that personal wealth, which was continually flowing from you by those various out-lets of the Pope's revenues, his legate's court, dispensations, indulgences, pilgrimages, offerings at shrines, masses for the dead, and a thousand other arts of coining you into gold.

Thus our kings were rescued from vassalage; vast tracts of land emerged as from the deluge, and passed into common property; multitudes of idle drones were converted into laborious citizens to defend and enrich the hive they before plundered; and time itself was encreased to us, and the year doubled its length for public labours.

So far was only saving or restoring; but by leaving marriage free to the clergy, which God left free to all,

B. 2.

great

* Exodus xx. 9.

† I find in a MS Missal of Abbelwood, Bishop of Winchester, compiled by Godman, first abbot of Thorney, about the year 980, the number of holy-days (besides the moveable fasts and feasts) were only 41; which in the Missal of Sarum at the Reformation were grown to 176. Our Calendar has only 28, including the state holy-days.

great numbers, from the observable blessing on the undefiled bed, have been brought into existence, and added considerably to the riches of the people. If fruitfulness was reckoned so great a benefit to a state as to draw public rewards and privileges to the father of three children, with what favourable regard should these children be received, who are in such numbers, produced as it were out of nothing, from persons who were formerly under a canonical inability, and are thrown into the public stock?

That great has been the increase since the reformation may appear from a passage in a popish writer so early as the second of *Queen Mary*, who is objecting this very increase as a national misfortune, and computes the issue of priests, monks, canons, friers, and nuns for the five years then last past as more than thirty thousands. * "What great increase of people, says he, hath this been above that should otherwise have been in so few years? And what would this in process of twenty or thirty years grow unto, if marriage of such persons should still be permitted? What city, yea what realm or country would be able to hold the generations of a few years in so great a liberty of marriage?" Let this give you a guess at the great increase of people from this event; and in confutation of his bad divinity, and as bad politics, in representing as a curse what was the original blessing on mankind, we appeal to the experience of two hundred years, and to many in this illustrious assembly, as ample evidence of the great service and ornament which the children of the clergy have been to this nation.

* Dr. Martin of Priests unlawful marriages.

Yet profitable as the fruit of such marriages has been to the state, the consequence has been, and circumstanced as the Clergy are, unavoidably must be, misery to thousands of their families. So little regard has been had to those poor men's widows, which delivered this nation, that they were presently forgot. The sacrilegious avarice and depredations ¶ made by some of King Henry the VIIIth's and King Edward's courtiers were as notorious as scandalous; and though many remonstrances were made to obtain more suitable recompence to such as laboured in the word and doctrine, yet *their words were not heard*; and their successors to this day find their revenues diminished and their burthens encreased. More than one half of what are called *Living*s are under 50*l.* a year, and near one fourth part under 20*l.* More than a third part are plundered churches, whose tithes were taken from them in the days of Popery for the maintenance of monasteries, and not restored to the clergy when those monasteries were suppressed, and their lands restored to the laity. Many of these fall in market-towns where the cures are large; and though in the days of Popery they could tolerably well subsist single persons by the addition of chantries, obits, commemorations, masses for the dead, dirges, and § personal tithes of trade and merchandise: yet now the superstition of the former is purged away, and the vexations and difficulties attending the recovery of the other, have obliged the Clergy generally to drop them; when their expences are encreased upon them by the addition of their families; themselves restrained by statutes from making any improvements

¶ § Vide Notes at the end of the Sermon.

improvements by secular employments and occupations; obliged to bear their part in the public burthens (though formerly privileged from them) equally with those whose estates descend to their heirs; these circumstances point out abundant cause for the distresses of their relicts. The greater part of the other Clergy have only a more decent maintenance for life, something more suitable to their ingenuous and expensive education, continually lessened by the unjust frauds and subtraction of their dues, or the expences of recovering them; unable, therefore, to make provision for a family; or if they attempt it, by insisting on their rights, or by a frugal œconomy, what clamours, what contempt pursue them, and obstruct the good influences of their spiritual labours, their *wisdom is despised, and their words are not heard*. Such is the return made to the wisdom of these poor, who have *made many rich*! Even of the few more advantageous lots, how late (generally) do they fall into the lap? and what large demands are made upon them for the support of hospitality, dignity, and charity?

It is, therefore, too easy to account for such numbers, and in such extreme distress, of the Widows and Orphans of the Clergy of the Church of England. Yet the Clergy, with a religious trust and confidence in that God at whose altars they serve, not for filthy lucre certainly, but with a desire to promote His truth and glory, and set forward the salvation of those under their care, cheerfully dedicate themselves to *His* and *your* service, and hope to find from *your* Christian disposition ready instruments of *His* providence for good to those afflicted ones they leave behind them.

Their widows have not been bred to beg; they have known more prosperous days; happy in the husband of their

their choice, often respected for his character, and valued for their own. Well reported of for good works; having brought up children, relieved the afflicted, and diligently followed every good work. View her now, the dear object of her affection snatched from her, and with him her barrel of meal wasted, and her cruise of oil failed: the nuptial torch quenched in tears, and the very bread of adversity denied her—she has none to eat! Cast out of those doors which she kindly opened to distress; and in want of that charity, which to her power, yea and beyond her power, she was wont to reach out to others! Pierced to the Soul with the cries of her fatherless children, the tongue of her sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: her young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them *. Reduced almost to envy the lamentation and great mourning of Rachel, weeping for her children, and refusing comfort, because they were not †: but her's, alas! are they to continue; in the most distressed and helpless circumstances, in bitter aggravation of her other sorrows, the sharpest arrow in the quiver of Misfortune! O let her glean in your harvests, even among the sheaves, and reproach her not. Nay let fall also some of the handfuls on purpose for her, and leave them that she may glean them, and rebuke her not ‡.

And with great thankfulness we tell it out among the people, what great things have been done for them; and that remote as these distresses may lie from the throne, yet have they touched royal hearts, kings have been their nursing fathers, and queens their nursing mothers.

King Charles II. granted his charter for the Corporation of the Governors of the Charity for Relief of the poor

* Lamentations iv. 4.

† Matthew ii. 18.

‡ Ruth xv. 16.

poor Widows and Children of Clergymen, with licence to purchase and hold estates to the yearly value of 2000l. which his late Majesty King George was graciously pleased to extend to 3000l. more; by his own royal example laying the foundation of this future superstructure: which was followed by a like benefaction from the Consort of our present sovereign, Queen Caroline.

Queen Anne, with a very memorable piety, gave the tenths and first fruits for the augmentation of poor livings yearly, to cut off, as far as this shall be able to effect it, the source of this distress. In which very humane and christian design many of the venerable prelates, and other persons of quality and fortune, have joined; by restoring to some poor vicarages the great tithes, or by augmenting small benefices with lands or donations of their own, or in concurrence with the Queen's bounty allowed to encourage such benefaction.

In the mean time the widows continue in great numbers, more than the Corporation can relieve, though enabled by the liberality of many pious persons (chiefly among the Sons of the Clergy) to reach out their charitable hands to above five hundred: and those they do relieve can receive no more than six pounds a year: so that they are still forced to *send widows away empty**. But I trust we shall every year have opportunities of blessing God, as we do this, for recent instances of endeavours to make these *widows hearts to sing for joy*. Such as the liberal bequests of his late Grace of Canterbury, and the Countess of Salisbury; as also that of our present worthy Diocesan the Lord Bishop of London, and that very compassionate remembrance of their afflictions by the late

Reverend

* Job. xxii. 9.

Reverend Dr. Gange; that the sorrowing husbands, when their last agonies are heightened from the prospect of calamity falling on their families, may apply that promise of God to their own comfort, *Leave your fatherless children, I will preserve them alive: and let your widows trust in me.*

To invite you to be fellow-workers with God in preserving these fatherless children alive was the humane design of this day's institution. They ask not for riot, that they may consume it on their lusts. They only entreat to be made useful, to be so disposed of as that they may be of service to the public by an honest industry: permit them to be a benefit to yourselves. What husbandman grudges to cast his wheat into the furrow from whence he expects to reap a plentiful harvest? Had it been that their fathers had *sinned, and done wickedly, yet these sheep what have they done?* Had their fathers been your greatest enemies you would not dash their children against the stones; which yet were kinder than to leave them to waste away, a curse to themselves, and a nuisance to the community, in an useless and unrelieved poverty. But the case is far otherwise: these children were early tinctured by their parents with virtuous principles, or, if left too young for instruction, at least deserve some regard as descended from an order of men, who have been to you the happy instruments of spiritual and temporal blessings. That plan, the effects of which have made you a flourishing people, laid the train, which from an original neglect necessarily leads to their distress. This our enemies rejoice in, and urge it

*Isaiah xlix. 11.

as a providential curse attending the reformation. A reproach which I hope they, who have it in their power, will lessen by degrees daily. However, that so many of the children of the clergy want, is no miracle: the interposition of providence is evidently on the other side; that so few of them want: that so many of them by its blessing on their industry are in affluence; that God has raised so many of them to the highest eminence in courts, in camps, in magistracies, in every profession, and every art: that this voluntary engagement set on foot by the sons of the clergy, for the relief of their poor brothers and sisters, has for so many years continued, and meets with such kind support and encouragement from the public: that it has succeeded so far as to see another voluntary society shooting from it, yet indeed young and weak, and in need of plentiful streams and kindly influences for its growth, who in still farther relief of the widow, and benefit of her infants, are endeavouring to maintain and educate them before they are qualified to receive the favours of this charity which I am now to recommend to you.

But this assembly, I persuade myself, needs no excitement to so good a work: their presence is a testimony that they came to encourage it.

If the devotion of the day has kindled a warmer fire of charity in their breasts, let it again burst forth with repeated flames, and let the grateful incense ascend in alms, as a memorial before God. If anthems of praise, and the voice of melody with stringed instruments and organs have raised our souls to heaven, let them bring from thence that song of angels, *glory to God in the high-*

est, and on the earth peace, goodwill towards men!*. And let it animate us to prepare ourselves for an admission to that celestial choir by works of charity; our Lord having promised that *what we do to one of the least of his brethren, he will regard it as done unto himself, § and receive them into his kingdom.* And that *whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, he shall in no wise lose his reward. †* Such as shall meet to eat bread together at this feast of charity, will not, I trust, appear as spots there, but will doubtless remember, *while they eat the fat, and drink the sweet, to send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared. ‡*

At this time especially, when our enemies threaten our very protestantism, let us adorn our profession with all christian graces, and *the greatest of these is charity*; that religious wisdom, which is *better than strength*, may still preserve this city which it has more than once delivered. The son of Syrach tells us, that *our alms shall fight for us against our enemies better than a mighty shield and strong spear. ††* On the other hand God has threatned, *ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely bear their cry: and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.*** As for us, God forbid that we should sin in ceasing to pray for you; ¶ that he who giveth victory to kings, would preserve his servant, our sovereign, from the peril of the sword: that we may be saved from the hands of strange children, whose mouth talketh of va-

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nity,

* Luke. ii. 14.

§ Matt. xxv. 40.

† Matt. x. 42.

‡ Neh. viii. 10.

†† Ecclus.

** Exod. xxii. 23, 24.

¶ 1 Sam. xii. 33.

nity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity: § that our sons may grow up as the young plants, and our daughters be as the polished corners of the temple: that our garners (now almost exhausted) may be full and plenteous of all manner of store; that our sheep, (now sickly and diseased) may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets: that our oxen (now distempered) may be strong to labour; that all your fears may vanish, that there be no decay (or perhaps rather || hostile invasion) no leading into captivity, and no complaining in our streets! If we boast that we are a reformed church, let us shew that our religion is pure and undefiled, by visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, † and by our faith working by love, recommend ourselves to his protection who is himself a father of the fatherless, and defendeth the cause of the widows, even God in his holy habitations.* Happy are the people that are in such a case; yea blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God. ¶

§ Psalm clxiv. 0—14.

|| יִצְחָק vid. 2 Sam. v. 20.

† James i. 27.

* Psalm lxxviii. 5.

¶ Psalm cxliv. 15.

NOTES to the REFERENCES in Page 13.

¶ The following evidences of King Henry himself, Calvin to the Duke of Somerset, and Bishop Ridley to Mr. Cbeke, will give a sufficient view of these depredations.

“ I perceive which way the wind bloweth. There are a sort
 “ of you to whom I have liberally given of the possessions and
 “ revenues of the suppressed monasteries; which, like as you
 “ have lightly gotten, so have you more unthriftilly spent,
 “ some at dice, other some in gay apparel, and other ways
 “ worse, I fear: and now that all is gone you would fain have
 “ me make another chevaunce with the Bishop's lands to ac-
 “ complish

“complish your greedy appetites.” King Henry in discourse to Sir Thomas Seymour.

Le second mal est, que le revenu des cures est destraiect et dissipé: en sorte qu'il n'ya point pour nourrir gens de bien, qui seroient propres a faire l'office de vrayz pasteurs. Et par ce moins on y mest prestres ignorans, qui emporte un grande confusion. Car la qualité des personnes engendre une grande mepris de la parole de Dieu——Je vous pris donc, Monseigneur, ——qu'il vous plaise employer toute la force a la correction de cet abus——Il ne doit pas faire mal a ceux qui tirent aujourduy profit du bien des eglises, que les pasteurs ayent nourriture souffisante —— Car ils ne peuvent pas prosperer en fraudant le peuple de Dieu de la pasture spirituelle, en ce qu'ils priuent les eglises de bons pasteurs. Calvin to the Protector, July 25,

1551.

There is fallen a Prebende in *Paul's* called *Cantrelles*, by the death of one *Layton*. This Prebend is an honest man's living, of xxxiv pounds and better in the Kinges books. I woulde with all my heart geve it unto M. *Grindal*, and so I should have him continually with me, and in my diocese to preach. But alas! Syr, I am letted by the meanes (I fear me) of such as do not fear God. One Master *William Thomas* one of the Clarks to the Counsell, hath in tymes past sette the counsaile upon me, to have me to graunte that *Layton* might have alienated the sayde Prebend to him and his heires for ever, God was mine ayde and defendour that I dyd not consent unto his ungodly enterprise. Yet I was so then handled before the Counsel, that I graunted that whensoever it should fall I should not give it, before I should make the Kinges Majestie previe unto it. Now *Layton* is departed, and the Prebend is fallen, and certaine of the counsell (no doubt by this ungodly man's means) have written unto me to stay the collation. And whereas he despaireth that ever I would assent that a preachers living shoulde be bestowed on Him, he hath procured Letters unto me, subscribed with certaine of the Counselles hands, that now the King's Majestie hath determined it unto the furniture

niture of his highness stable. Alas! Syr, this is a heavy hearing. When papistrye was taught, there was nothing too litle for the teachers: when the Bishop gave his benefices unto idiots, unlearned, ungodly, for kindred, for pleasure, for service, and other worldly respects, all was then well allowed. Now where a poor living is to be given unto an excellent clarke, and man knowen and tried to have both discretion and vertue, and such an one as before God I do not know a man yet unplaced and unprovided for, more meete to set forth Gods word in al *Englande*: when a poor living (I say) is to be given unto such a man, that then an ungodly person shall procure in this sorte letters to stoppe and lette the same, alas! M. Cbeke, this seemeth unto me to be a ryghte heavy hearing. Is this the fruite of the Gospel? Speake, M. Cbeke, speake for Gods sake in God's cause — help that neither horse, nor yet dog be suffered to devoure the poor livings appointed and founded by godly ordinance to the Ministers of God's word—what preachers shall I get—if either ungodly men, or unreasonable beastes be suffered to pull away and devoure the good and godly learned preachers livings? *Fulham. 23 Jul. 1551. N. London.*

§ The religious obligation to make these offerings is, *Honour the Lord with all thy substance, and with the first-fruits of thy increase.* Prov. iii. 9. And to pay some of them to the Clergy arises from our Lord's command, *that they who preach the gospel should live on the gospel.* 1 Cor. ix. 14. Built on this common equity in general, that *the labourer is worthy of his hire.* Luke x. 7. And in this case, particularly, that they being engaged in these labours for men's salvation to the necessary neglect of providing for themselves, they should *receive temporal things from those to whom they sow spiritual.* Rom. xv. 27. Therefore *personal* offerings are as justly due as the *predial* or *mixt*. The *proportion* was not determined early in the Christian Church: but the practice in the Jewish Church of a *tenth part* gave the general scope at which they aimed; therefore Chrysostome advises, ad Epist. 1 Cor. *μη ἐλαττω τῆς δαπάνης σου πέντηκα* *not to offer less.* And Augustine, *Quodcunque te pascit inge-*
niun

num Deest, et inde decimas expetit unde vivis; de militiâ, de negotiis, et de artificio recte decimas. Serm. de temp. At length in the year 590 it was decreed by the 5th Canon of the Council of *Sevil*, *Omnis rusticus, et artifex quisque de negotiis justam decimationem faciat, sicut enim Deus dedit, ita de omnibus decimam exigit.* In *England*, one of the laws of *Edward the Confessor*, confirmed by *William the Conqueror*, was, *De omni annona decima garba Deo debita est et ideo reddenda—quin et—de bosco, vivariis, piscariis, virgultis, et hortis, et negotiationibus, et omnibus rebus quas dederit Deus.* Among the Provincial Constitutions, the allowed laws of the land as to ecclesiastical affairs, there is the following Constitution of *Robert de Winchester*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*, *Statuimus etiam quod decimæ personales solvantur de artificibus, et mercatoribus, scilicet de lucro negotiationis, similiter de carpentariis, fabris, cæmentariis, textoribus, pandoxatricibus, et omnibus aliis operariis.* They are likewise required by Statutes, 27th *Henry VIII.* and 32, the 2d and 3d *Edward VI.* But through some defect in those Statutes there is now an universal subtraction of personal tithes. Those defects, however they may defeat the legal demand of such tithes, cannot lessen or take away the religious and equitable obligation of making such offerings. And till some effectual means be enacted to compel those to it who regard no divine or equitable laws but as enforced by human authority, we hope the more conscientious will take pattern from the *Eastern Church*, (where no certain quantity was appointed by Canon,) and by their free bounty and voluntary offerings in some degree remedy this great injustice.

F. I. N. I. S.

A LIST of the *Annual Amount* of this Charity, as com-
pleat as could be procured, commencing with 1721. By
which will be perceived, how much in general the Charity
has encreased from the *Approbation and Bounty* of the Pub-
lic, and which, it is hoped, it will continue to do, so as to
equal the *Wants* of those whom it was calculated to provide
for.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>		<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1721 --	330	16		1740 --	784	1	6
1722 --	328	16		1741 --	834	2	
1723 --	382	6		1742 --	866	6	2
1724 --	566	10		1743 --	819		
1725 --	630	5		1744 --	848	16	9
1726 --	575	4		1745 --	1044		
1727 --	651			1746 --	922	10	6
1728 --	595	17	9	1747 --	1062	2	
1729 --	523	6	11	1748 --	916	6	6
1730 --	722	6	4	1749 --	985	12	6
1731 --	840	1		1750 --	1134	14	
1732 --	951	1	3	1751 --	1167	19	
1733 --	909	6		1752 --	1101	18	6
1734 --	1000	3		1753 --	1063	2	6
1735 --	850	5	3	1754 --	976	8	2
1736 --	837	7		1755 --	1096	3	6
1737 --	856	9	7	1756 --	973	18	3
1738 --	935	2	7	1757 --	912	7	6
1739 --	912	11	3				

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